Modesty BLAISE

THE KILLING GROUND

by PETER O'DONNELL and JIM HOLDAWAY

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

MODESTY BLAISE WAKES FROM A DRUGGED SLEEP
I WAS DRIVING... HEADLIGHTS PICKED UP A CAR IN THE DITCH... I STOPPED AND GOT OUT... CAN'T REMEMBER ANY MORE
obo

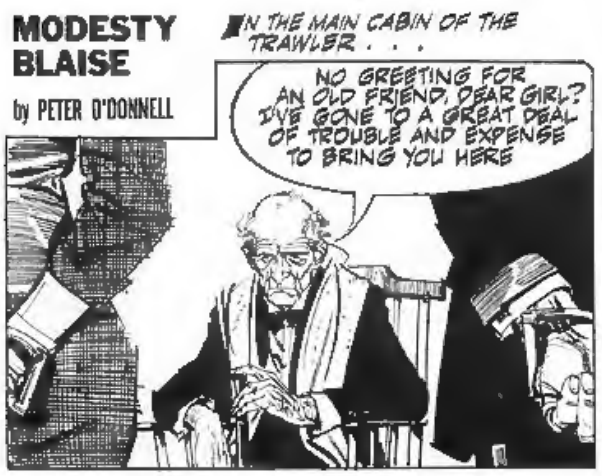
WILLIE!
'ALLO, PRINCESS... WE'RE ON A BOAT AND I 'EARD A HELICOPTER TAKE OFF JUST NOW — BUT THAT'S ALL I KNOW, I ONLY CAME ROUND A COUPLE OF MINUTES AGO MESELF
A1

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL


IN THE MAIN CABIN OF THE TRAWLER . . .
NO GREETING FOR AN OLD FRIEND, DEAR GIRL? I'VE GONE TO A GREAT DEAL OF TROUBLE AND EXPENSE TO BRING YOU HERE

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

I HAD A BIG BUSINESS IN SOUTH AMERICA... YOU DIDN'T JUST SMASH IT, YOU HUNTED ME... HUNTED ME ACROSS THE WORLD AND BACK TO GET ME PUT AWAY
FIVE YEARS IN THE PERUVIAN MINES...
YOU RUINED THOUSANDS OF LIVES WITH YOUR FILTHY TRADE, BELLMAN — DON'T EXPECT US TO BLEED FOR YOU
BUT YOU WILL, DEAR GIRL, YOU WILL — YOU AND GARVIN ARE GOING TO DISCOVER HOW IT FEELS TO BE HUNTED BY EXPERTS...
A4

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

ON THE RIGHT, CHARLIE BRIGHTSTAR, CHOCTAW INDIAN — NEXT TO HIM, OPPERMAN, BIG GAME HUNTER — AND ON THE LEFT, DEMPSTER, PROFESSIONAL MERCENARY
THEY'RE GOING TO HUNT YOU TO DEATH — THREE THOUSAND POUNDS FOR THE JOB, AND A BONUS OF TWO THOUSAND FOR WHOEVER MAKES A KILLING
WE'RE HOVE-TO NEAR A SMALL ISLAND WEST OF THE ORKNEYS, ALMOST BARREN, QUITE UNINHABITED — THAT'S THE KILLING GROUND
A5

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

YOU'LL BE PUT ASHORE IN THE CLOTHES YOU'RE WEARING
AND STILL HANDCUFFED?
ON THE CONTRARY, I'M PROVIDING ONE BOTTLE OF WATER, ONE COLT · 32 REVOLVER — YOUR FAVOURITE HAND GUN, DEAR GIRL — AND ONE KNIFE FOR GARVIN
THEY WON'T SAVE YOU... JUST ADD A LITTLE SPICE TO THE HUNT, THAT'S ALL
A6

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

BELLMAN'S REVENGE... MODESTY AND WILLIE ARE KIDNAPPED AND PUT ASHORE ON A SMALL ISLAND, TO BE HUNTED DOWN AND KILLED

YOU GET TWO HOURS GRACE, THEN WE COME AFTER YOU
HERE'S YOUR GEAR — CATCH
BELLMAN ALWAYS WAS A BIT CRAZY — GONE OVER THE EDGE NOW, I RECKON
HE'S DYING, BY THE LOOK OF HIM — JUST HANGING ON TO KNOW WE'VE BEEN PUT DOWN
MAYBE WE COULD'VE BOUGHT THOSE KILLERS OFF?
NO, THEY REALLY WANT TO WIN PRIZE MONEY IN A MAN-HUNT
CUT A CHUNK OFF MY SKIRT, WILLIE, I CAN'T AFFORD TO BE CRAMPED
A7

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THEY'RE ALL PRO'S... OUR BEST CHANCE IS THE WAITING GAME, WILLIE — FIND A GOOD PLACE TO HOLE UP AND LET THEM GET TIRED LOOKING FOR US
THAT'S ABOUT WHAT I FIGURED — MAKE IT LAST A FEW DAYS AN' THEY'LL GET CARELESS... WE'LL 'AVE TO THINK ABOUT FOOD AND SHELTER, THOUGH
YES... LET'S PICK UP SOME SEAFOOD WHILE WE'VE GOT THE CHANCE
AND WE'LL WADE A FEW HUNDRED YARDS ALONG WHILE WE'RE ABOUT IT — THAT CHARLIE BRIGHTSTAR CAN PROBABLY TRACK BY SCENT
A8

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
THEY'VE HAD TWO HOURS
THEN START THE HUNT... IT SHOULDN'T TAKE LONG... THE FOOLS THINK THE GUN AND KNIFE I GAVE THEM WILL HELP...
WE EACH TAKE A SECTION OF THE ISLAND LIKE WE PLANNED, RIGHT?
RIGHT... AND NO POACHING
DESIRABLE LOCATION, GOOD VIEW, BACK ENTRANCE... AND A MENU OF SEAWEED, FERN, MUSSELS AND CRAB
WILLIE — THIS WATER BELLMAN GAVE US IS SALT!
A9

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
SALT WATER?
YES... AND IF BELLMAN'S PLAYING IT THAT WAY, MAYBE THE COLT'S LOADED WITH BLANKS
CARTRIDGES LOOK ALL RIGHT, PRINCESS, BUT I'D BETTER OPEN ONE UP AND SEE IF —
DON'T BOTHER, WILLIE...
THE BARREL'S PLUGGED SOLID HALFWAY DOWN — FIRST SHOT I FIRED WOULD HAVE COST ME SOME FINGERS
AHH... BELLMAN 'AS'N'T CHANGED
A10

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
M'MM... IT'S A FAIR-SIZED ISLAND
WELL, WE'VE NO GUN AND NO WATER... BUT WE CAN STILL KEEP HIDDEN HERE ALL DAY
NIGHT TIME'S BEST FOR US TO MOVE AROUND — CUTS DOWN THEIR ADVANTAGE WITH THE RIFLES
NOW THERE'S A VERY ODD THING, WILLIE... LOOK
OPPERMAN'S HEADING RIGHT FOR US — HE MAY BE A GREAT WHITE HUNTER, BUT NOBODY'S THAT GOOD!
NOT EXACTLY STALKING, IS IT? MUST KNOW YOUR GUN'S NO GOOD
A11

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

A DIRECTION FINDING GADGET WOULD MAKE SENSE — IF WE WERE CARRYING SOMETHING TO HOME-IN ON
THAT'S RIGHT, PRINCESS! I KNEW THERE WAS SOMETHING FISHY ABOUT THIS KNIFE...
A12

MODESTY BLAISE

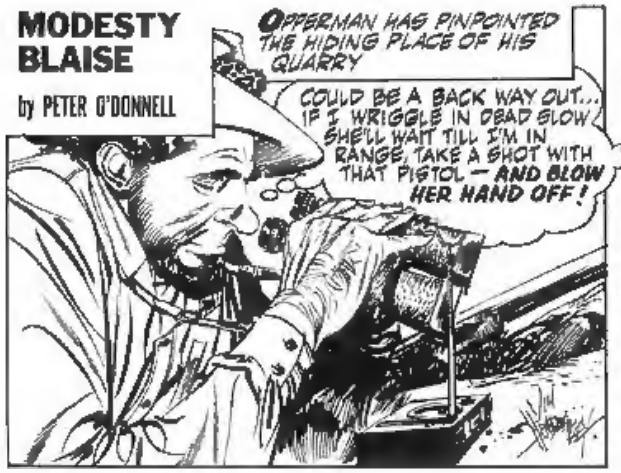
by PETER O'DONNELL

BELLMAN'S CONSISTENT... THE WATER WAS SALT, THE REVOLVER WAS RIGGED TO BLOW APART AT THE FIRST SHOT — THERE HAS TO BE SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE KNIFE

MINIATURE TRANSMITTER IN THE HAFT, AND THE HUNTERS'VE GOT DIRECTION FINDERS — PROBABLY A LOOP AERIAL AND A MAGIC EYE, ALL NICE AN' SIMPLE
NO — TOO USEFUL AS A DECOY!
NO POINT IN SMASHING IT NOW, WILLIE
LET'S 'AVE A STRIP OF YOUR JERKIN, PRINCESS
A13

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL


OPPERMAN HAS PINPOINTED THE HIDING PLACE OF HIS QUARRY
COULD BE A BACK WAY OUT... IF I WRIGGLE IN DEAD SLOW SHE'LL WAIT TILL I'M IN RANGE, TAKE A SHOT WITH THAT PISTOL — AND BLOW HER HAND OFF!

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

I THOUGHT I MIGHT 'AVE KILLED HIM, BUT HE'S ONLY KNOCKED OUT— BE COMING ROUND SOON

GOOD— HE CAN HELP A LITTLE

IF HE'LL TALK...

HE WILL IF WE PUT ON A GOOD ENOUGH ACT

SOME TIME LATER, AS OPPERMAN COMES MUZZILY TO HIS SENSES, HE HEARS VOICES

MIGHT AS WELL WAIT TILL 'E COMES ROUND, PRINCESS

NO, GODDAMIT! KILL HIM NOW AND LET'S GET MOVING!

A16

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

THE VOICES PENETRATE OPPERMAN'S DAZED MIND

WE COULD **MAKE** 'IM TELL HOW THE THREE OF 'EM PLANNED TO OPERATE THIS HUNT, PRINCESS—

HE'S TOUGH, WILLIE, AND MAKING HIM TALK WOULD TAKE TOO LONG...

SO STOP ARGUING AND SUP THAT KNIFE BETWEEN HIS RIBS **NOW!**

HE'S 'OLDING 'IS BREATH!

OKAY... I GUESS IT'S BEST TO DO IT BEFORE HE COMES ROUND

WAIT! FOR GOD'S SAKE DON'T! I'LL TELL YOU ANYTHING!

'ALLO! HE'S AWAKE

A17

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

SO YOU SPLIT THE ISLAND IN THREE SECTIONS AND YOU'RE WORKING INDEPENDENTLY?

YES! YOU'LL FIND A MARKED MAP IN MY PACK— WE SURVEYED THE PLACE LAST WEEK!

THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE... WE **KNOW** BELLMAN, WE KNOW HE'D WANT THIS MAN-HUNT TO BE LONG AND SLOW AND PAINFUL FOR US...

... SO WHY DID HE GO IN FOR THE BLOCKED GUN, THE BUGGED KNIFE, AND THE DIRECTION FINDERS?

BECAUSE HE'S **DYING...**

A18

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

OPPERMAN TALKS — FOR HIS LIFE

YES! BELLMAN **DID** PLAN THIS AS A LONG HUNT— BUT THREE DAYS AGO HE HAD ANOTHER HEART ATTACK— HE **KNOWS** HE'S JUST ABOUT THROUGH

... SO HE SPEEDED IT UP— GAVE YOU A GUN THAT WOULD BLOW YOUR HAND OFF, A KNIFE WITH A RADIO BUG IN IT, A SUPPLY OF **SALT** WATER

HE'S COUNTING ON THE HUNT BEING **FINISHED** BY SUNDOWN!

WE'LL TRY TO OBLIGE HIM

A19

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

DEMPSTER, PROFESSIONAL MERCENARY, MAKES A CHECK WITH HIS DIRECTION FINDER

HEY... MY LUCK'S TURNED!

THEY'RE MOVING OVER! OPPERMAN MUST HAVE FLUSHED THEM BUT MISSED GETTING A SHOT

BIG GAME HUNTER— PHOOEY!

HALF A MILE AWAY, CHARLIE BRIGHTSTAR PICKS UP THE ELECTRONIC SCENT

GETTING NEAR MY STRETCH OF TERRITORY...

A20

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

THE KNIFE, THE RADIO BEACON THAT GUIDES THE HUNTERS TO THEIR PREY, STANDS IN A GULLY THAT CROSSES FROM CHARLIE BRIGHTSTAR'S TERRITORY TO DEMPSTER'S

THIS IS ABOUT RIGHT, ACCORDING TO OPPERMAN'S MAP

THEY'LL COME FROM EACH SIDE ALONG THE GULLY, AND FASTER THAN'S GOOD FOR THEM— BECAUSE THERE'S BONUS MONEY FOR WHOEVER MAKES A KILL

THAT REDSKIN'S THE BIGGEST DANGER, I RECKON...

YES— I'D BETTER TAKE HIM AS I'VE GOT THE RIFLE, WILLIE... YOU TAKE DEMPSTER

A21

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

MODESTY MOVES SEVERAL HUNDRED YARDS DOWN THE LONG GULLY, CHOOSES HER POSITION, AND WAITS...

GET THE DROP ON HIM FROM BEHIND AS HE GOES PAST...

CAN'T COUNT ON HEARING HIM— NOT IF HE MOVES LIKE A CHOCTAW INDIAN...

FIVE MINUTES GO BY, AND THEN A VOICE SPEAKS SOFTLY

Freeze!

A22

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

CHARLIE BRIGHTSTAR HAS TURNED THE TABLES... HE SPEAKS IN A LOW, PENETRATING WHISPER

Lay that rifle down real quiet and don't raise your voice...

Nice ambush, lady... but I can SMELL a human at thirty yards

WHY DIDN'T HE SHOOT ME DOWN RIGHT AWAY?

Don't try anything— you'll never make it

HE THINKS WILLIE'S CLOSE BY— DOESN'T WANT ANY NOISE— HE'S OUT TO GET THE BONUS MONEY FOR KILLING, BOTH OF US...!

A23

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

Next time you want to ambush a redskin, make sure you're down-wind of him...
Just a little thing... but it could have got you killed
AIMING TO COME IN CLOSE AND CLUB ME — BUT DOESN'T WANT ME TO GUESS
LET'S CHECK...
MODESTY PUTS UP HER HANDS
A24

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

Put your hands down, lady...
I THOUGHT SO... GOING TO CLUB ME OVER THE HEAD... NO NOISE... THEN HE GETS A CHANCE AT WILLIE
MODESTY IS READY FOR THE SUDDEN SWING OF THE RIFLE BUTT...
...DUCKS UNDER IT, AND PIVOTS ON ONE LEG
A25

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

AS CHARLIE BRIGHTSTAR REELS FROM THE PIVOT-KICK, MODESTY LUNGES FOR A HOLD...
UHH!
TAKE A LONG COUNT, BRIGHTSTAR ...YOU EVEN LOOK LIKE MOVING AND YOU GET A LEAD TICKET TO THE HAPPY HUNTING GROUNDS
A26

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

DEMPSTER MOVES ALONG THE BROAD GULLY
BLAISE AND GARVIN MUST BE PRETTY CLOSE TO THAT INDIAN'S TERRITORY — I GOT TO NAIL THEM FAST!
THAT'S OPPERMAN'S BUSH HAT! WHAT'S HE DOING AROUND HERE?
LOOKS LIKE A MESSAGE STUCK IN IT...
A27

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

DEMPSTER MOVES UP TO THE BUSH HAT... REACHES FOR THE PAPER

WHY THE HELL WOULD OPPERMAN LEAVE A MESSAGE...?

BOO!

THE RIFLE IS SUDDENLY TORN FROM DEMPSTER'S HAND

IT'S FROM ME— DIDN'T WANT TO SHOUT IT IN YOUR EAR, IN CASE IT MADE YOU JUMP

A28

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

YOU SIT DOWN NICE AND QUIET WHILE WE WAIT

YOU... GOT OPPERMAN?

THAT'S RIGHT— AND CHARLIE BRIGHTSTAR'S BEING TAKEN CARE OF ABOUT NOW

HE'S TRICKY —HE'LL SURE AS HELL GET BLAISE!

IF HE DOES, YOU'RE **DEAD**...SO YOU'D BETTER PRAY YOU'RE WRONG, MATEY

A29

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

YOU GOING TO KILL?

MAYBE...BUT RIGHT NOW WE'RE WAITING FOR A SIGNAL THAT YOUR FRIEND DEMPSTER HAS BEEN DEALT WITH

I DON'T WANT US TO GET UNDER WILLIE GARVIN'S FEET WHILE HE'S BUSY

SEVERAL HUNDRED YARDS AWAY...

RIGHT... NOW I THINK I'LL 'AVE YOU TIED UP, MATEY, JUST IN CASE YOU FANCY YOUR CHANCES

A30

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

WILLIE GARVIN FOLDS THE LITTLE PARACHUTE TIGHTLY, PUTS IT IN HIS SLING AND HURLS IT HIGH IN THE AIR

DON'T WANT ANY NOISE TILL WE **BOTH** KNOW IT'S SAFE

THERE... WHEN THE PRINCESS SEES THAT, SHE'LL KNOW **YOU'RE** OUT OF ACTION

AND IF SHE FIRES TWO SHOTS, THEN **I'LL** KNOW SHE'S GOT CHARLIE BRIGHTSTAR ALL WRAPPED UP

A31

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

'ALLO, PRINCESS — NO TROUBLE?
A LITTLE. HE GOT THE DROP ON ME... BUT HE WAS GREEDY, WANTED BOTH OUR SCALPS — AND MISSED HIS CHANCE
I'LL WATCH THESE TWO WHILE YOU GO AND BRING OPPERMAN, THEN WE'LL FIGURE THE NEXT MOVE
HALF AN HOUR BEFORE SUNSET THERE COMES THE DISTANT SOUND OF RIFLE FIRE FROM THE ISLAND
AH... AT LAST, CAN YOU SEE ANYTHING, KRUPER?
NO...
A32

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

AS DARKNESS FALLS...
MR. BELLMAN! THERE'S THE SIGNAL — THE HUNT IS OVER!
BLAISE AND GARVIN ARE DEAD
AHHH...
THE MOTORBOAT ARRIVES TO PICK UP THE HUNTERS
THEY'RE STAYING 'ERE FOR THE NIGHT, AN' SO ARE YOU TWO — 'OP OUT, QUICK!
A33

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

WENG WILL BE LISTENING OUT ON THE USUAL FREQUENCY EVER SINCE I WENT MISSING LAST NIGHT — WE'LL CALL HIM ON THE SHIP'S RADIO
I CAN'T SEE THE CREW ARGUING... AND WITH ANY LUCK WENG CAN GET DAVE CRAYTHORPE UP 'ERE WITH 'IS HELICOPTER BY NOON
FIVE MINUTES LATER...
YOU!
WILLIE GARVIN'S ON THE BRIDGE WITH AN AUTOMATIC RIFLE — IF YOU AND YOUR CREW DO AS YOU'RE TOLD YOU MIGHT STAY OUT OF GAOL
A34

MODESTY BLAISE

by PETER O'DONNELL

LOOK, I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING! BELLMAN CHARTERED THE SHIP... ONCE THOSE THREE KILLERS WERE ABOARD I COULDN'T ARGUE —
SHUT UP! WHERE'S BELLMAN NOW?
THERE... HE DIED JUST AFTER THE SIGNAL CAME THAT — THAT YOU AND GARVIN WERE DEAD
THEN I GUESS HE DIED HAPPY... IT'S BETTER THAN HE DESERVED, BUT I WOULDN'T BEGRUDGE ANYONE THAT
A35

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
AN HOUR BEFORE NOON, WENG ARRIVES
GOOD MORNING, MISS BLAISE
HALLO, WENG
KRUPER, YOU CAN PICK UP THOSE MEN ASHORE NOW —AND THEN DO WHAT YOU DAMN WELL LIKE
YOU'RE... NOT GOING TO THE POLICE?
WE MIGHT— SO YOU'D BETTER NOT HANG AROUND
THAT IS VERY UNUSUAL ATTIRE FOR THIS TIME OF DAY, MR. GARVIN
I KNOW, WENG, I KNOW — BUT IT'S BEEN A VERY UNUSUAL CAPER
A36
END OF STORY